

# Sustainable Diets

## Task Force Report Form 2023



### Task Force Chair/s

Stineke Oenema, Barbara Burlingame

### Active Task Force Members

Sandro Dernini, Forum on Mediterranean Food Cultures, Italy

Kunchit Judprasong, Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University, Thailand

Mark Lawrence, Deakin University, Australia

Jennie Macdiarmid, University of Aberdeen, Scotland

Farah Naja, American University of Beirut, Lebanon

Penina Vatucawaqa, National Food and Nutrition Centre, Fiji

Lesley Macheka, Marondera University of Agriculture, Zimbabwe

Ex officio: Harriet Kuhnlein, ex-Chair of Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems TF

Changes since last report: Mr Macheka is a new member, who joined last year. Ms Namukolo Covic stepped down because of a too busy schedule (and she is also part of the indigenous food systems and nutrition group with whom we collaborate). The current group covers a huge scope of expertise and is also better balanced in terms of gender and geography and age.

In the past, Benjamin Caballero was the ex officio IUNS Council member on the TF; no one from the Council was assigned in 2023.

**Has your objective(s) as a task force been modified since the original proposal? If so, please provide brief justification.**

The objectives have not been modified.

## Have the activities to be undertaken been modified since the original proposal? If so, please provide brief overview and justification.

The activities have been better defined and elaborated.

### Brief overview of activities since last annual report

Activities during this period focused on collaborations.

At the ICN Tokyo, meetings were jointly held between the IUNS Task Forces on Sustainable Diets and Traditional and Indigenous Food Systems and Nutrition (TIFSAN). Planning was undertaken during the year 2023 involving several members from each TF, for a webinar series for the Ag2NUT platform: FOOD AND KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, SUSTAINABLE DIETS, AND EVIDENCE.

Background and Objectives of the three part series are to:

- Ø Strengthen the narrative across the agriculture, food system and nutrition communities on how evidence should be acquired, disseminated and used.
- Ø Provide examples and discuss how to incorporate indigenous knowledge into the evidence base while also respecting Indigenous Data Sovereignty
- Ø Navigating contradictions: holistic vs reductionistic approaches; innovation vs tradition; global vs local
- Ø Stimulate additional forms of knowledge dissemination through engaging a wider community of practice on the topic (supplemental issue, discussion paper, podcast series).

Collaboration continued with the Sustainable Food Systems Med Platform Initiative (SFS), CIHEAM Bari, and a FENS Task Force on the Mediterranean diet. Following the 3rd World Conference on Mediterranean Diet held in Bari in September 2022, a paper was prepared in 2023 on the Mediterranean diet as a model for sustainable diets. The TF also prepared a paper for an upcoming book, Toward More Sustainable and Resilient Food Systems in Mediterranean Countries, to be published in 2024 through the Platform.

Within this same collaboration, the TF participated in the preparation and delivery of a double session at the FENS Conference, Belgrade, 17 November 2023 addressing the topic, Measuring and Promoting Adherence to the Mediterranean diet. In preparation for this session, the TF developed an online survey to ascertain points of agreement/disagreement among the core group. This formed the basis of a facilitated debate at the FENS on the evolution of thinking on the elements of what constitutes the Mediterranean diet, and

sustainable diets generally. The TF members participated virtually by chairing a discussion based on the survey and presenting a paper on the development of a voluntary code of conduct for the Mediterranean Diet and sustainable diets. The survey, and progress on the development of voluntary guidelines, will continue through 2024, to present outcomes at the ICN Paris in 2025.

**Please list any successes accomplished during this period (aligned with proposed measures of success from original proposal, or include justification for modifications).**

The double session in the TF collaboration presented at FENS was well attended and the discussions and feedback were stimulating and productive. It has led to the addition of new, younger researchers to the collaboration and the acceleration of the planning of activities for the next period leading up to the ICN Paris when the TF will conclude in its present form.

**Please mention your plans for the coming year and how they have been adapted based on success to date (if appropriate).**

The webinar series planned in 2023 will be conducted in April 2024. It will include the following three parts.

1. Methods: This webinar will provide an overview of past and present methods used to collect data on community knowledge related to traditional and indigenous foods and discuss Indigenous Data Sovereignty
2. Perspectives: This webinar will discuss diverse approaches and perspectives that accompany research methods and building the scientific evidence base. It will cover topics such as two eyed seeing, perspectives of connectivity and relationships with people and nature, Western and Indigenous science.
3. Evidence: that starts with the ecosystem, disaggregating to biodiverse diets, foods, and nutrients and how to connect them. It will build upon the notion of re-thinking hierarchies and evidence for sustainable diets and food systems, within a framework of the six dimensions of food security, using a rights-based approach and respect for diverse ways of generating evidence.

The collaboration with SFS, CIHEAM Bari and FENS will continue through 2024 and reach its conclusion at the ICN Paris in 2025. The survey described above identified areas of

convergence and divergence on the metrics and components of the Med diet. This will be used in 2024 as the basis for a wider exploration and discussion to steer the decisions of metrics/index, on policies related to promoting adherence, on the design of a new pyramid, and contribute to the wider subject of sustainable diets and sustainable food systems. Sessions are planned for presenting these outcomes at the ICN in 2025.

Other activities will include the drafting of at least one, and possibly several papers for publication in the peer reviewed literature. A research topic on sustainable diets and food systems in the Oceania region is being proposed to Frontiers in Nutrition and it includes papers from the TFs Sustainable Diets and Traditional and Indigenous Food Systems and Nutrition.